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TELEGRAM

December 01, 2003

To: No Action Addressee  
Action: Unknown  
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 5133 - UNKNOWN)  
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PARM, MOPS  
Captions: None  
Subject: SCENESETTER FOR GENERAL ABIZAID'S VISIT TO THE UAE  
Ref: None

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S E C R E T ABU DHABI 05133

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INFO: FCS  
CXABU:  
ACTION: POL  
INFO: AMB DAO P/M USLO DCM ECON RSO

DISSEMINATION: POL  
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: CDA:RAALBRIGHT  
DRAFTED: POL:JFMAYBURY  
CLEARED: USLO:RSIMM

VZCZCADI219  
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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
TO RUCAACC/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//OSD/NESA//  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2551  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 ABU DHABI 005133

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CENTCOM FOR POLAD AMB LITT AND CCJ2  
NSC FOR THEROUX  
DOD FOR OSD/ISA/NESA  
STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/NGA AND PM/RSAT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/30/13  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PARM](#) [MOPS](#) [GCC](#) [IZ](#) [TC](#)  
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR GENERAL ABIZAID'S VISIT TO THE UAE

Ref: A) Abu Dhabi 5003, B) Abu Dhabi 4613

1. (U) Classified by Richard A. Albright, Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., for reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

2. (C) General Abizaid: I would like to welcome you back to the UAE. The highlight of December in the UAE will be

the 2003 Dubai Air Show, the third largest air show in the world and the premier aviation and air industry show in the Gulf region. The Dec. 7-11 Air Show will be preceded by a UAE Air Force-hosted Middle East Air Chiefs' Conference. The UAE Government regards this as a major event and expects strong U.S. support and presence. Various models of U.S. military aircraft and equipment, plus aircrew and ground crew will be present. During your two visits to the UAE in December, we have requested meetings with UAE Armed Forces Chief of Staff LTG Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (MbZ), who was appointed Deputy Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi on November 30, and Dubai Crown Prince General Sheikh Muhammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum (MbR). MbZ's promotion clears up any doubts about who will assume the position of Abu Dhabi Crown Prince after Shaykh Zayed departs the scene and current Crown Prince Shaykh Khalifa assumes the presidency.

13. (S) Your September 28 visit to Abu Dhabi was greatly appreciated, in large part because of your frank exchange with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Shaykh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan and MbZ on Iraq, Iran, and terrorism (described in ref B), but also because we benefited from a first-hand account of developments on the ground in Iraq. The concerns you expressed about the Sunnis resonated with your Emirati hosts. In your upcoming visit, everyone will be interested to hear your view on the recently agreed plan to accelerate the transfer of authority to the Iraqis.

14. (U) The host of the Air Show, Dubai, is the second richest and most populous of the seven Emirates that make up the U.A.E. It is an international metropolis boasting rows of skyscrapers, beautiful beaches, and a hopping nightlife. Over the last 30 years, Dubai has seen massive economic development, brought about by a leadership determined to leverage dwindling oil production into strong growth in trade, industry, and tourism. Its airport serves as a regional hub, and its huge Jebel Ali port is the 12th biggest in the world. This calendar year, the UAE has had over 600 port visits by the US Navy, the majority of which have been at Jebel Ali. The Dubai Port Authority is expanding the container terminal at Jebel Ali. The current berthing for aircraft carriers will need to move to allow that expansion. The UAE is studying locations in the port that could accommodate aircraft carriers.

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SUGGESTED THEMES  
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15. (C) We propose that you touch on the following key bilateral military issues, in addition to the more general themes outlined below in para six:

-- Congratulate your hosts on the Dubai Air Show, and underscore that it advances the U.S. security and commercial interests, directly supports USCENTCOM war fighting and engagement goals and objectives, furthers military-to-military relations, and improves regional access.

-- Provide a "look-ahead" on our likely military footprint both in the UAE specifically and the region more generally, particularly in light of the President's Nov. 25 announcement on global force posture (MbZ).

-- Focus the UAE military leadership on the need, as part of our commitment to building and solidifying our strong military ties, to work out a functioning Defense Cooperation Agreement (MbZ, MbR);

-- Express our enthusiasm about the validation course at the Air Warfare Center, scheduled for January 2003. The Center will be a model for multilateral training in the region (MbZ);

16. (S) More broadly, you may also wish to:

-- Congratulate MbZ on his promotion to Deputy Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi.

-- Express thanks for the UAE's exemplary support for U.S. and coalition efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, namely access to bases and logistical support, including air and sealift of Bulgarian troops to Iraq, the UAE SOC deployment at Bagram, as well as extensive intelligence coordination. Thank MbZ for his offer to use a squadron of the UAE's newly acquired South African Seeker II UAV's (MbZ);

-- Pass on our gratitude for the UAE's generous humanitarian assistance, especially the UAE Armed Force's establishment of the very successful Shaykh Zayed hospital in Baghdad and the UAE's efforts to re-supply with equipment and medicine other Iraqi hospitals and the provision of basic foodstuffs to the Iraqi people (MbZ);

-- Express thanks for the UAE's strong public show of support for the Iraqi Governing Council and the interim cabinet, who have been received at the highest levels on several visits to the UAE (MbZ, MbR);

-- Consult and provide assurances on need to maintain Iraq's territorial integrity, minimize external influence (Iran) and manage sectarian rivalries (MbZ, MbR);

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BILATERAL MILITARY ISSUES  
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Regional Footprint:  
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17. (C) If appropriate, I would recommend that you outline with the leadership -- MbZ -- what we see in terms of our likely regional footprint, and specifically what we have in mind for the UAE. MbZ and his Air Force Commander have dropped strong hints at being open to a more robust presence, but we need to prepare them for the direction in which we may wish to move here. The Emiratis are likely to have seen the President's November 25 announcement on global force posture and may have questions.

Defense Cooperation Agreement  
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18. (C) We need to discuss a successor agreement to the dormant, unimplemented Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA), which comes up for renewal in 2006. Following a meeting with the Ambassador in late October during which she noted the need to start addressing the DCA issue, MbZ directed his staff to begin discussions with us on the way ahead for a re-negotiated DCA. This will require heavy lifting on both sides and the sooner we agree on a strategy and define our "non-negotiable" items, the easier it will be to proceed with the Emiratis. Your visit would provide a good opportunity to resurface this important bilateral military issue. Embassy representatives met with GHQ lawyers in mid-November to hear their views. The Emiratis continue to have reservations about criminal jurisdiction provisions, as well as concerns over perceived ambiguities regarding the status of US personnel in the UAE. We are seeking guidance on how to proceed.

Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement  
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19. (C) Both MbZ and UAE Air Force Chief of Staff MGen Khalid have broached the issue of negotiating an Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA). MGen Khalid has expressed some frustrations with support to UAEAF C-130s operating to and from Bagram in support of the UAE SOF deployment. We are seeking guidance and assistance to initiate ACSA negotiations.

Air Warfare Center  
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¶10. (C) The Gulf Air Warfare Center at al-Dhafra Air Base has tremendous potential to become a resource for multilateral training, defense cooperation, and compatibility. The GAWC will provide an excellent opportunity for CENTCOM pilots to hone their skills in theater. It comes with the added benefit of offering the perfect setting for our officers to build long-term relationships with their Arab and European counterparts. The GAWC represents the UAE leadership's commitment to increasing inter-operability with U.S. and coalition forces.

ATACMs/Predator Update -- (If Raised)

¶11. (S) We are moving forward with the ATACMs 1A deal. The Emiratis have agreed to the principles outlined in what will be a regional Memorandum of Understanding governing the use of this system. We have forwarded the MOU to GHQ for UAE approval. Once we have their approval, the next step in the process is for GHQ to submit an LOR for Pricing and Availability, after which we can begin the LOA process. We are awaiting the provision of a revised Pricing and Availability and Acquisition, following an Emirati visit to the US last July to discuss their forecast system requirements.

¶12. (S) Over the past year, MbZ raised his desire to procure the armed Predator B with just about every interlocutor in Washington, and Deputy Prime Minister and de facto Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamdan bin Zayed Al-Nahyan raised the Predator issue his meetings in late October in Washington, including with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of State. Both believe this system will provide

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the UAE the much-needed capability to survey and defend its long, porous coasts and inland borders. The Joint Staff is currently coordinating a policy decision with State regarding release of this MTCR Category I weapon system to the UAE. CENTCOM in September forwarded an assessment to OSD supporting sale of an unarmed Predator B to the UAE. We are awaiting an OSD policy decision on this issue. The Emiratis will find it difficult to understand that we can sell them F-16s while denying them an armed Predator B.

E-2C Hawkeye If Raised)

¶13. (C) We are making progress on a UAE request to obtain E-2C Hawkeye Airborne Early Warning aircraft. Although the original LOA lapsed in July without a UAE signature, in August they signed a Letter of Intent and deposited \$5 million to continue negotiations. The US Navy International Programs Office led a team in September and delivered a final LOA to the UAE on November 16. The Emiratis are studying the final LOA with a goal of signing it, then announcing a deal at the Dubai Air Show. The five aircraft have been transferred to Northrop Grumman, which is awaiting UAE acceptance of an LOA to begin refurbishing.

AH-64 Apache A-to-D Remanufacture (If Raised)

¶14. (C) The AH-64 Apache A-to-D Remanufacture LOA lapsed in July. UAE officials continue to conduct discussions with Boeing and US Army officials as though the LOA were still valid, despite notice to the contrary. The UAE must provide another formal Letter of Request and obtain updated Pricing and Availability before Boeing and USASAC proceed with this project. Meanwhile, the planned transfer of the AH-64A fleet from UAEAF to UAE Land Forces has been postponed, pending a remanufacture decision.

Remote sensing (If Raised)

¶15. (S) The Emiratis continue to request new, long-term access to satellite imagery of Iran and the UAE region, as part of its strategic relationship with the United States. A USG interagency team visited the UAE in November to discuss a government-to-government agreement that the USG had provided to the UAE last May. In an unexpected move, the Emiratis presented alternative text to the agreement, requesting an option to lease a US satellite. The USG team must now review the proposal and respond to the Emiratis when a review is complete.

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BROADER ISSUES  
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Afghanistan and Iraq: Support for Coalition Efforts  
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¶16. (S) The UAE Armed Forces has deployed a 35-man Emirati Special Operations contingent to Bagram Air Base. As you know, the UAE continues to play a very helpful role in Afghanistan, particularly in the provision of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance. The UAE Armed Forces provided the Afghan National Army with approximately \$50 million in assistance in kind in 2002 and overall humanitarian assistance has crossed the \$50 million mark. The UAEG also continues to provide substantial personal financial support to President Karzai. In Iraq, the UAEG provided a "lift" in support of Iraqi stabilization efforts.

¶17. (S) Regarding MbZ's offer to use a squadron of the UAE's newly acquired South African Seeker II UAV's, we are coordinating the prospects for the deployment with the UAE Special Operations Command and CENTCOM/J5, CJTF-180, and CJSOTF-A. A joint US team traveled to the UAE in early November to discuss operational UAV experience in Afghanistan, command relationships, integration and fusion, intel support, strategic lift, beddown location, force protection, logistics, and third country contractor support. UAE SOC has proposed a deployment as early as January 2004, and we are working the details for implementation.

Iraq: UAE Humanitarian/Medical Assistance  
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¶18. (SBU) As you know, the Emiratis were among the first in the Arab world to step up to the plate in providing much-needed humanitarian assistance and medical relief to the Iraqi people. The Embassy, the HOC in Kuwait and CENTCOM worked closely with the UAE Red Crescent Authority to move supplies into Iraq and transport Iraqi patients to the UAE for treatment. This cooperation continues. Thanks to the system put in place by CENTCOM and the HOC, the Emiratis are now moving assistance into Iraq on an almost daily basis using their own transportation. The Shaykh Zayed hospital in Baghdad continues to receive hundreds of patients a day.

Iraq: Timely Public Statements  
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¶19. (U) The Emiratis have strongly supported Iraqi delegations at official meetings in the region or when they visited the UAE. The UAEG also issued strong public condemnation for the attacks against the UN's Baghdad headquarters and against Ayatollah Baqir al-Hakim and his followers in Najaf. Privately, the senior leadership has told us that they applaud the U.S. decision to accelerate the transfer of authority to the Iraqis (see ref A).

Iran: Worries Persist  
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¶20. (S) All of our senior Emirati interlocutors worry about Iran's intentions in Iraq and in the Arabian Gulf region as a whole. Iran is one of the major reasons the UAEG is actively pursuing acquisition of ATACMS, remote sensing technology, and is so keen to get Predator. The Emiratis

have urged us to help prevent Iran from meddling in Iraq's domestic affairs. They view Iran's nuclear program with deep suspicion and have consistently supported a tough approach by the IAEA.

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